



Disability Management as a Corporate Social Innovation Process

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Abstract. This exploratory paper discusses disability management as a corporate social innovation process, based on the mapping of selected cases of enterprises often cited as international best practices. The aim of the study is to identify some critical success factors firms should consider when developing their disability management programs. To this end, the selected cases are analyzed based on a grid defined by comparing disability management guidelines published by international organizations generally considered as important points of reference for the job integration of persons with disabilities. The contribution of the paper is twofold. On the one hand, the results of the mapping can help firms to identify and classify different strategies and measures they can adopt to develop their disability management programs. On the other hand, the paper contributes to the bridging of a gap still present in the literature since disability management has so far received little attention in the literature on both corporate social responsibility and corporate social innovation.

Keywords: Disability management · Corporate social innovation · Persons with disabilities · Work integration · Work retention

1 Introduction

According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, social innovation “refers to a novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than current solutions [1]. Mulgan, Ali, Halkett and Sanders [2] define social innovation as “the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to meet social needs” (p. 9). It amounts to a “complex process of introducing new products, processes or programs that profoundly change the basic routines, resource and authority flows, or beliefs of the social system in which the innovation occurs” [3, p. 235]. The International Labor Organization [4], relates the social value of innovation to the capacity of determining social transformations, fostering social development, increasing welfare and reducing social inequalities. Hence, the main goal of social innovation is to identify and satisfy social needs emerging not only from the traditional situations of hardship and marginalization, but also from new challenges posed by the contemporary world, e.g. sustainability, quality of life and quality of work.

Social innovation has been traditionally discussed mainly with reference to not-for-profit organizations. To refer to the firms' responsibility for the impacts of their decisions and activities on society and the environment the term Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is used, instead [5]. However, organizations and business entities are more and more expected to move beyond the traditional CSR to a new and different paradigm that can cope with the demands and needs of the present dynamic economic environment [6]. Kanter [7] defines Corporate Social Innovation (CSI) this new paradigm that aims at commercially driven benefits and at the same time contributes to the development of human well-being and societal quality and quantity of life [8]. This particular role of enterprises for social innovation has been explicitly acknowledged in the Social Innovation Europe initiative that is based on the idea that "social innovation can and must come from all sectors – the public sector, the private market, the third sector, and individuals/households – meaning that also firms have a role on it" [9, p. 19].

In the continuously growing literature on CSI, corporate social innovation is generally defined along the lines of the traditional definition of social innovation [8, 10]. Much of the research on CSI has focused on various aspects of corporate social innovation – e.g. the dimensions of innovation, the scope of change and how change is generated. However, less attention has been paid to the implementation process of corporate social innovation programs and to key organizational aspects, including the impacts on operational structures and processes and the role of organizational culture [11]. These aspects are critical as, different from CSR, "CSI involves deeper collaboration across functions within a firm and with external parties to co-create something new that provides a sustainable solution to social ills" [12, p. 5014].

Employment of persons with disabilities (PWD) extends social responsibility of corporate organizations [13–15] and represents a real opportunity for CSI. In fact, by increasing the level of diversity in the workforce, disability management represents a significant innovation opportunity for firms, one that can contribute to the firms' success and sustainable competitive advantage [16]. Notwithstanding this, the issue of PWDs' employment is still relatively less explored [17] and the role of business enterprises in supporting the employability of PWDs has rarely been reported in a clear manner [18, 19].

The paper discusses the establishment and development of the disability management function by firms as an example of CSI. By focusing on disability management, the paper aims at exploring some organizational aspects of the implementation of CSI programs, including the role of the management, the organizational culture and climate, the workforce composition, and the accommodation of working conditions. To this end, the paper considers how disability management has been implemented in a selected set of enterprises often cited as international best practices. The selected cases are analyzed based on an analysis grid defined by comparing disability management guidelines published by international organizations generally considered as important points of reference for the job integration of PWDs. The grid includes some of the most relevant organizational aspects of the development of corporate disability management. By using the grid to map the selected cases, different strategies and measures emerge that firms can adopt for the development of their disability management programs.

The contribution of the paper is twofold. On the one hand, the analysis grid can be seen as providing a guideline for a structured process for the development of the disability management function within firms. In fact, the mapping of the cases discussed in the paper allows the identification of some critical points that an organization should consider in designing and developing its disability management function, which is of practical importance. On the other hand, the paper contributes to the bridging of a gap still present in the literature, since disability management has so far received little attention in the literature on both CSR and CSI [15, 20, 21].

The paper proceeds as follows. The next section introduces disability management as a corporate social innovation process. Then the methodological approach is described, and the analysis grid is introduced. In the section that follows the analysis grid is applied to map the selected cases and the results of the mapping are discussed. Finally, some conclusions are drawn from the mapping and some limitations of the study as well as some future research directions are presented.

2 Disability Management as a Corporate Social Innovation Process

With the increasing differentiation of the workforce during the '90s, diversity has been suggested to enhance problem solving capabilities of a group, to provide better service to a diverse customer base, and to boost organizational creativity [22]. This led firms to start developing diversity management programs to transform possible problems deriving from workforce heterogeneity into opportunities [23]. According to Thomas [24] 'diversity management' refers to management practices implemented to deal with the issues of workplace inequality and diversity. Key to diversity management is that no person's competence and character should ever be overlooked or undervalued on account of race, sex, ethnicity, origins, or physical disability. Said differently, "diversity management is concerned with acceptance of a multicultural workforce comprising employees with diverse ethnic, racial, religious and gender backgrounds" [25, p. 249], as well as chronically ill and disable workers. This presupposes an open and inclusive organizational climate and an organizational culture that promotes workers for their merits and makes professional growth opportunities available for all [14, 15, 26].

Disability management, as well as chronic disease management, has occasionally been incorporated into diversity management. This is done based on the view of disability as a form of social diversity. However, there are some relevant differences between diversity management and disability management. Shrey and Lacertes [27] define disability management as "a proactive process that minimizes the impact of an impairment on the individual's capacity to participate competitively in the work environment" (p. 5). On the other hand, diversity management can be defined as "the voluntary organizational actions that are designed to create greater inclusion of the employees from various backgrounds into the formal organizational structures through deliberate policies and programs" [28, p. 208]. From this point of view, although diversity management and disability management share a common focus, there are important differences between the two. Diversity management "focuses more heavily on integrating different groups or units of employees", whereas for disability management the basic issues are "related to prevention, accommodation, being injured and the resulting return-to-work process.

Thus, disability management primarily deals with actual physical barriers arising from health issues. It focuses on the individual employee” [23, p. 87].

In general terms, it is now common to consider disability management as a broad and variegated set of practices aimed at promoting and supporting work integration and re-integration of people with disabilities. Disability management represents an increasingly relevant organizational function. Due to medical advances and increased life expectancy, the percentage of workers suffering from different non-ability conditions (including disabilities) is continuously increasing. Often these people are too young to retire and not sick enough to take disability leave. Moreover, they also want the self-esteem that comes from making ongoing contributions, and the social benefits that work relationships can offer [29]. Too often organizations are unaware of the chronic illness or disability conditions that impact on an employee’s work life and the risk is that the situation only becomes apparent when it is too late for any intervention. As pointed out in [25], increasing organizational awareness of these issues helps to retain talented workers and allows people with chronic illness and disabilities to continue to contribute to the organization.

Disability management represents a corporate approach to enable organizations to take an active stance in maintenance and optimal functioning of employees with disability problems. Increasing participation of employees with disability or handicap, employing workers with partial work disability and offering them a new chance at labor participation is one of the major goals of re-integration policies [25]. Hence, disability management not only helps organizations to retain talented workers or to transform possible problems deriving from workforce heterogeneity into opportunities, but also contributes to fulfil more general social needs by promoting inclusion and improved quality of life for people in conditions of hardship. Disability management can thus be considered a relevant, and sometime even critical, component of the corporate social innovation activities.

Despite the increasing importance of disability management for firms and society at large, the concept is still broad and nebulous [30]. This makes it difficult for firms to identify the most appropriate disability management strategies and measures to adopt in their specific context. A structured analysis of how disability management has been implemented by firms considered as international best practices can thus help to identify and evaluate alternative solutions and guide firms in the development of their disability management programs.

3 Methodological Approach

The research reported in this paper has been conducted in two phases. In the first phase a search on the website of government agencies and international organizations generally considered as important point of reference for the job integration of PWDs has been performed. The search involved the following organizations:

- International Labour Organization
- World Economic Forum
- World Bank
- World Health Organization
- United Nation Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- OECD
- International Disability Alliance
- Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC)
- European Disability Forum
- European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions
- European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities
- PATHWAYS Project – “Participation To Healthy Workplaces And Inclusive Strategies in the Work Sector”
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

From the comparative analysis of documents (guidelines, white papers, policy briefs, reports, and recommendations) published by the organizations above, the most important aspects to consider in the implementation of disability management as an organizational function have been identified. These elements, that can be considered as critical success factors for the implementation of disability management, have been codified in a grid that has been used in the second phase of the research to map some well-known international successful cases of disability management.

The components of the grid have been grouped according to a logic corresponding to the steps of an ideal structured approach to the implementation of disability management as a specific organizational function. This sequence of steps can be found, with some marginal variations, in the principal international guidelines for the implementation of disability management. For each step, some actions have been identified that should be performed to implement the disability management function. Finally, for each action to be performed, some alternative options are listed that have been found in the guidelines consulted for the study.

The complete grid with all the actions and the alternative implementation options is represented in the Figs. 1, 2 and 3 below.

DESIGN PHASE	
A.	What motivates the need to implement a disability management function
A.1	The need to comply with legislation
A.2	The opportunity of accessing funding by public or private organizations
A.3	The need to manage critical situations emerged within the organization (absence of personnel due to disability leave, deterioration of organizational climate, etc.)
A.4	The input from the top management
A.5	A line manager's autonomous initiative
A.6	The implementation of the organization's broader diversity management policy
B.	Assessment of the initial conditions
B.1	Assessment of disabilities within the workforce (known and emerging disabilities)
B.2	Assessment of the employment status of the employees with disabilities (tasks, wage status, skills, etc.)
B.3	Assessment of the potential barriers to the full employment of persons with disabilities (physical barriers, type of tasks, working hours, etc.)
B.4	Detection of stereotypes and preconceptions potentially affecting the full employment of persons with disabilities
B.5	Assessment of the diversity/disability management initiatives already implemented within the organization
B.6	Definition of a general organization's plan for the management of disability
C.	Definition of the organizational arrangement
C.1	Implementation of the disability management function as an autonomous organizational unit with a manager formally appointed as disability manager, possibly based on the appropriate certification (C.1a)
C.2	Appointment of a disability manager (without the establishment of an autonomous disability management organizational unit), possibly with the appropriate certification (C.2a)
C.3	Hiring of external consultants to support the internal disability management organizational unit
C.4	Hiring of external consultants to support the organization's disability manager
C.5	Outsourcing of the disability management function to external consultants
C.6	Identification of non-managerial roles for supporting the integration of persons with disabilities at the operational level
D.	Definition of the expected results
D.1	Increased number of persons with disabilities employed in the organization
D.2	Improved the return-to-work conditions after disability leave periods (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)
D.3	Improved conditions that help employees with disability stay at work (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)
D.4	Make advancement opportunities available to employees with disabilities (guarantee to all the employees of the same training and career opportunities)

Fig. 1. The analysis grid: design phase

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE	
E.	Implementation of disability management measures
E.1	Design and implementation of training programs for managers devoted to specific aspects of the employment of persons with disabilities (recruitment, performance evaluation, career advancements, integration of persons with disabilities in teams, etc.)
E.2	Design and implementation of training programs specifically addressed to employees with disabilities to facilitate the acquisition of specific skills and operational capacities
E.3	Design and implementation of training programs addressed to all the employees on topics related to the integration of persons with disabilities
E.4	Managers' awareness raising interventions to sensitize the employees on topics related to the integration of persons with disabilities
E.5	Informational support provided by the HR function (or by other organizational units) to the employees with disabilities on their rights and obligations
E.6	Informational support provided by the HR function (or by other organizational units) to the line managers that must supervise the integration of persons with disabilities
E.7	Continuous involvement of the management in the development and implementation of the organization's disability management strategy
E.8	Design and implementation of measurement systems to assess the effectiveness of disability management interventions
E.9	Involvement of the 'competent doctor' in the design and implementation of the interventions for the integration of employees with disabilities
E.10	Collaboration with public and private organizations dealing with the employment of persons with disabilities both in the design and the implementation of the organization's disability management strategy
F.	Structural interventions for the accommodation of the working conditions
F.1	Interventions to remove physical barriers
F.2	Interventions to adapt the workplaces to different types of disabilities
F.3	Adoption of assistive technologies at the workplace
F.4	Accommodation of lighting, computer screens and communication devices
F.5	Interventions for easing the access to documents and files within the organization's information system
F.6	Adoption of a flexible working hours policy for the employees with disabilities
F.7	Adaptation of the tasks to the skills and abilities of the employees with disabilities

Fig. 2. The analysis grid: implementation phase

The cases to consider for the mapping have been identified starting from a report prepared for the DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission [31]. The report describes 24 company case studies of disability management across Europe. Each of the 24 cases has been considered and searched on the web to find further documentation for the aim of triangulation. The search involved both

EVALUATION PHASE	
G.	Output evaluation of the disability management interventions
G.1	Increased number of persons with disabilities employed (because of the disability management interventions)
G.2	Number of employees with disabilities involved in the disability management interventions implemented
G.3	Number of employees with disabilities who leave the work after the disability management interventions implemented
G.4	Improvement of the employees with disabilities' job positions and tasks because of the disability management interventions implemented
G.5	Improvement of the employees with disabilities' wage status because of the disability management interventions implemented
H.	Outcome evaluation of the disability management interventions
H.1	Detection of significant changes in the performances of the employees with disabilities
H.2	Detection of a significant reduction in the absence hours of the employees with disabilities
H.3	Detection of significant changes in the colleagues' perception of the performances of the employees with disabilities
H.4	Detection of a significant reduction of critical situations involving employees with disabilities
H.5	Detection of a positive impact on the general organizational climate
H.6	Detection of a positive impact on the organization's informal communication systems, especially with respect to the communication with the employees with disabilities

Fig. 3. The analysis grid: evaluation phase

secondary data sources and the companies' websites. At the end of the search, documentation useful for triangulation has been found only for 8 cases out of the 24 described in [31]. The selected cases are reported in Table 1.

Table 1. The selected cases

Case	Sector	Activity	Dimension (number of employees)	Employees with disabilities
1	Public	Local services	Large (>5000)	29% of the workforce
2	Private	Cosmetics	Large (>1800)	6% of the workforce
3	Private	Trade	Medium (110)	15% of the workforce
4	Private	Services	Large (>100000)	19% of the workforce
5	Private	Manufacturing	Small (40)	7% of the workforce
6	Private	Pharma	Large (>33000)	9% of the workforce
7	Private	ICT	Large (>350000)	12% of the workforce
8	Private	Bank	Large (>14000)	6% of the workforce

The 8 cases have been described by applying the grid developed in the first phase of the research to verify whether and how each element of the grid has been implemented in the specific case. This allowed to map different experiences of disability management with respect to the strategic vision behind the implementation, the contextual and organizational conditions that shaped the implementation, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the implemented solution.

The steps of the research are summarized in Fig. 4.

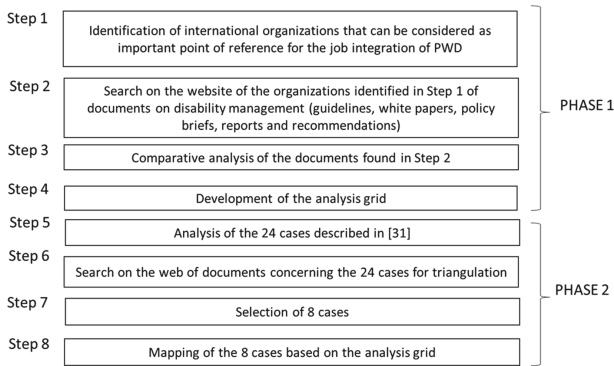


Fig. 4. The steps of the research

4 Mapping the Selected Cases

4.1 Design Phase

In most of the cases considered in the study, the disability management function has been activated as part of the organization’s broader diversity management function. In few cases the function has been activated because of an initiative directly promoted by the top management. Quite interestingly, in neither of the cases the need to comply with legislation or the opportunity to access funding - that are frequently mentioned among the reasons that can motivate firms to implement disability management - have played a role in the decision to implement the function. This can be considered as an indirect evidence that the more successful policies for disability management are those based on firms’ autonomously designed strategies.

Concerning the organizational arrangement, the prevalent solution is the appointment of a disability manager (although only in one case based on the appropriate professional certification), possibly supported by external consultants. Only in three cases an autonomous unit has been created for disability management and, quite interestingly, one of them is a medium-size firm, meaning that the dimension of the organization does not necessarily represent an impeding condition for that solution.

Finally, for 7 of the 8 organizations considered, the expected results have been precisely defined already in the design phase. In most of the cases they concern the conditions that can help employees with disability to stay at work (possibly through appropriate workplace accommodations).

4.2 Implementation Phase

The implementation phase is the core of the firms’ disability management strategies that, as observed above, in most of the cases have been designed to improve the conditions that can help employees with disabilities to stay at work. Hence, it is not surprising that most of the actions implemented by the firms amount to structural interventions for the accommodation of workplaces.

Quite interestingly, in almost all the cases considered in the study, measures have been implemented to adapt the job-tasks to the skills and abilities of the employees with disabilities. This, together with the design and implementation of intensive training programs specifically addressed to employees with disabilities, represents the core of the stay-to-work strategy implemented by the firms considered in the study.

In none of the cases, measures have been adopted to revise the working hours of the employees with disabilities, which means that the inclusion strategy implemented aims at introducing as few as possible differentiations between employees with disabilities and their colleagues. Interesting, although in somewhat negative terms, is also that in none of the cases the disability management strategy has been designed to make advancement opportunities available to employees with disabilities.

In most of the cases, measures have been implemented to assure the continuous involvement of the management in the development and implementation of the organization's disability management strategy. However, only in few cases specific information and training measures have been implemented to support the management in dealing with specific aspects of the employment and integration of PWDs. This helps explaining why only in two cases a role for managers has been envisaged to sensitize the employees on topics related to the integration of PWDs. Raising the employees' awareness on those topics has been considered relevant only in two of the cases. In these two cases specific training programs addressed to all the employees have been designed and implemented.

4.3 Evaluation Phase

In all the cases considered in the study, positive effects of the implementation of the disability management strategy are reported. These mainly concern significant changes in the performances of the employees with disabilities (6 cases), significant changes in the colleagues' perception of the performances of the employees with disabilities (5 cases) and a positive impact on the general organizational climate (4 cases). Interestingly, only in two cases an increase in the number of PWDs employed is reported, which confirms that for most of the organizations considered in the study, the implementation of the disability management function is intended more to retain employees with disabilities than to increase the employment of people with disabilities.

The mapping of the selected cases is summarized in the Figs. 5, 6 and 7 below.

DESIGN PHASE		
A.	What motivates the need to implement a disability management function	Case
A.1	The need to comply with legislation	
A.2	The opportunity of accessing funding by public or private organizations	
A.3	The need to manage critical situations emerged within the organization (absence of personnel due to disability leave, deterioration of organizational climate, etc.)	
A.4	The input from the top management	3,5,6
A.5	A line manager's autonomous initiative	
A.6	The implementation of the organization's broader diversity management policy	1,3,4,7,8
B.	Assessment of the initial conditions	
B.1	Assessment of disabilities within the workforce (known and emerging disabilities)	4
B.2	Assessment of the employment status of the employees with disabilities (tasks, wage status, skills, etc.)	
B.3	Assessment of the potential barriers to the full employment of persons with disabilities (physical barriers, type of tasks, working hours, etc.)	
B.4	Detection of stereotypes and preconceptions potentially affecting the full employment of persons with disabilities	3
B.5	Assessment of the diversity/disability management initiatives already implemented within the organization	4
B.6	Definition of a general organization's plan for the management of disability	1,2,3,4,6,8
C.	Definition of the organizational arrangement	
C.1	Implementation of the disability management function as an autonomous organizational unit with a manager formally appointed as disability manager, possibly based on the appropriate certification (C.1a)	1,3,4
C.2	Appointment of a disability manager (without the establishment of an autonomous disability management organizational unit), possibly with the appropriate certification (C.2a)	2,6,7,8
C.3	Hiring of external consultants to support the internal disability management organizational unit	
C.4	Hiring of external consultants to support the organization's disability manager	2,4
C.5	Outsourcing of the disability management function to external consultants	5
C.6	Identification of non-managerial roles for supporting the integration of persons with disabilities at the operational level	2,3,5
	Definition of the expected results	
D.1	Increased number of persons with disabilities employed in the organization	5,6,7
D.2	Improved the return-to-work conditions after disability leave periods (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)	
D.3	Improved conditions that help employees with disability stay at work (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)	1,2,3,4,6
D.4	Make advancement opportunities available to employees with disabilities (guarantee to all the employees of the same training and career opportunities)	

Fig. 5. Mapping of the design options

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE		
D.	Definition of the expected results	
D.1	Increased number of persons with disabilities employed in the organization	5,6,7
D.2	Improved the return-to-work conditions after disability leave periods (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)	
D.3	Improved conditions that help employees with disability stay at work (possibly also through appropriate workplace accommodations)	1,2,3,4,6
D.4	Make advancement opportunities available to employees with disabilities (guarantee to all the employees of the same training and career opportunities)	
E.	Implementation of disability management measures	
E.1	Design and implementation of training programs for managers devoted to specific aspects of the employment of persons with disabilities (recruitment, performance evaluation, career advancements, integration of persons with disabilities in teams, etc.)	1,7
E.2	Design and implementation of training programs specifically addressed to employees with disabilities to facilitate the acquisition of specific skills and operational capacities	2,3,5,6,7,8
E.3	Design and implementation of training programs addressed to all the employees on topics related to the integration of persons with disabilities	7,8
E.4	Managers' awareness raising interventions to sensitize the employees on topics related to the integration of persons with disabilities	3,4
E.5	Informational support provided by the HR function (or by other organizational units) to the employees with disabilities on their rights and obligations	4,6
E.6	Informational support provided by the HR function (or by other organizational units) to the line managers that must supervise the integration of persons with disabilities	4
E.7	Continuous involvement of the management in the development and implementation of the organization's disability management strategy	1,2,3,4,6
E.8	Design and implementation of measurement systems to assess the effectiveness of disability management interventions	1,4,6,8
E.9	Involvement of the 'competent doctor' in the design and implementation of the interventions for the integration of employees with disabilities	
E.10	Collaboration with public and private organizations dealing with the employment of persons with disabilities both in the design and the implementation of the organization's disability management strategy	1,2,7
F.	Structural interventions for the accommodation of the working conditions	
F.1	Interventions to remove physical barriers	2,6,8
F.2	Interventions to adapt the workplaces to different types of disabilities	2,4,6,8
F.3	Adoption of assistive technologies at the workplace	
F.4	Accommodation of lighting, computer screens and communication devices	6,7,8
F.5	Interventions for easing the access to documents and files within the organization's information system	6,7
F.6	Adoption of a flexible working hours policy for the employees with disabilities	
F.7	Adaptation of the tasks to the skills and abilities of the employees with disabilities	2,3,5,6,7,8

Fig. 6. Mapping of the implementation options

EVALUATION PHASE		
G.	Output evaluation of the disability management interventions	
G.1	Increased number of persons with disabilities employed (because of the disability management interventions)	1,5
G.2	Number of employees with disabilities involved in the disability management interventions implemented	
G.3	Number of employees with disabilities who leave the work after the disability management interventions implemented	
G.4	Improvement of the employees with disabilities' job positions and tasks because of the disability management interventions implemented	
G.5	Improvement of the employees with disabilities' wage status because of the disability management interventions implemented	
H.	Outcome evaluation of the disability management interventions	
H.1	Detection of significant changes in the performances of the employees with disabilities	2,3,4,5,6,7
H.2	Detection of a significant reduction in the absence hours of the employees with disabilities	1,4
H.3	Detection of significant changes in the colleagues' perception of the performances of the employees with disabilities	1,2,3,5,7
H.4	Detection of a significant reduction of critical situations involving employees with disabilities	
H.5	Detection of a positive impact on the general organizational climate	1,2,3,6
H.6	Detection of a positive impact on the organization's informal communication systems, especially with respect to the communication with the employees with disabilities	

Fig. 7. Mapping of the evaluation options

5 Final Remarks, Limitations, and Further Research Directions

Corporate social innovation aims at the development of new and novel products, processes, and services to fulfil social needs and to improved quality and quantity of life. Work integration and work retention of PWDs are social issues that will involve more and more people in the forthcoming years because of population ageing and the emerging of new forms of disability and inability. From this point on view, the firms' implementation of disability management can actually be considered a corporate social innovation process, especially when disability management is implemented within a more general plan for the management of diversity at the workplace.

As a social innovation process, disability management answers to different general social needs. First, the employment needs of PWDs, which represents a powerful tool for social integration of disabled people [32]. Second, by favoring the adaptation of the tasks to the skills and abilities of the employees with disabilities and the creation of good jobs for them, disability management contributes to debunking stereotypes and preconceptions about the productivity of employees with disabilities. This is key to create positive identities for disabled employees, against the rhetoric of ableism at the workplace [33]. Third, the implementation of successful disability management measures can lead to significant changes in the colleagues' perception of the performances of the employees with disabilities, with a positive impact on the general organizational climate. This creates the conditions for the social integration of PWDs at the workplace [13, 14, 26]. However, once the development of a positive perception of PWDs has been achieved at the workplace, it does not stay confined there. It can contribute to the debunking of stereotypes and preconceptions also in everyday life, thus determining a more general positive social impact.

Firms also can benefit directly from disability management in many ways. First, as a means of promoting their social image and reputation [34]. Second, as a strategy to improve their employees' retention policies, especially in case of the emerging of new disabilities or inability conditions within the employed workforce [17, 35]. Third, as a way to increase PWDs' productivity at the workplace and contribute to the company's success and sustainable competitive advantage [16].

However, implementing disability management is not easy and the integration of disabled people at the workplace does not come for free. The mapping of the activities that should be performed to implement disability management presented in this exploratory study highlights the complexity of this endeavor.

Structural interventions for the accommodation of the working conditions are generally considered critical for the success of PWDs integration policies [36]. As expected, this is confirmed by the mapping of the firms considered in the paper. The accommodation of the working conditions requires investments in infrastructures and, even more importantly, more flexible working arrangements, which can impact on the firm's organization of work. However, important as they are, structural interventions are not the most critical aspect of disability management. Even more important are interventions aimed at creating a positive cultural environment, which requires a continuous involvement of the management in the development and implementation of the organization's disability management strategy [14, 16]. This point also has been confirmed by the mapping of the selected cases.

Disability management is not an isolated organizational function and neither one limited to a small fraction of the workforce. The implementation of successful disability management impacts, more or less directly, on the whole organization [16]. As such, it should be designed, implemented, and evaluated as an organizational innovation process. The grid defined in this study and the mapping of the successful cases considered in the paper can help organizations to manage this complex innovation process.

A word of caution is here necessary. The mapping of the selected cases should not be considered as the description of 'ideal models' that can be transferred to different organizational contexts, eventually with some adjustments. They are not 'on the shelf' solutions different organizations can adopt, as each case presents peculiarities that are quite difficult to replicate in different contexts. Rather, the aim of the mapping was to highlight some critical elements that should be considered by firms in developing their disability management programs, based on how the work integration and re-integration of PWDs has been managed in some successful cases. The analysis grid should thus be considered as a reference model and the elements included in it as some critical success factors for the development of corporate disability management policies.

From this point of view, besides providing a useful analytical tool to map examples of disability management (as it has been used in this exploratory study), the analysis grid can also have a practical utility as a guideline decision-makers and managers can resort to in the definition, establishment, development and evaluation of the firm's disability management function.

In the paper disability management has been discussed as an example of corporate social innovation. However, apart from those more strictly related to disability, the organizational aspects highlighted in the paper that should be considered to make the disability management function efficient and effective, are relevant for any corporate social innovation initiative. Those aspects mainly concern: the definition of a general plan to frame the CSI initiative; the clear definition (since the design phase) of the expected outputs and outcomes; the continuous involvement of the management to support the initiative; the creation of the appropriate organizational climate; and the willingness to adapt the working condition, as needed.

This exploratory study has been based on a small number of cases. This is the main limitation of the paper, which does not allow to draw more general conclusions. However, the aim of the study was not a systematic study of disability management and the analysis grid it has been based on was not intended to be a complete description of all the alternatives an organization can consider to implement disability management. Rather, the aim of the study was exploratory, and both the analysis grid and the results of the mapping should thus be considered as preliminary. Indeed, further research is needed to test the grid for completeness and explanatory power, and more cases should be mapped to confirm and extend the conclusions drawn in the paper.

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